

CONTAINER

The present invention relates to a container, particularly though not exclusively for still-hot-from-cooking poultry.

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Such poultry will continue to exude juices for some time after cooking.

A primary objective of the present invention is to provide a container adapted to collect and retain the juices in the container, whilst the poultry is arranged on end 10 for display.

According to the invention there is provided a container formed of plastics material, the container having:

- a recessed base, with side walls along at least three sides of the recess;
- a domed lid, the base and the lid being adapted for closure of the container around a joint surface;
- a hinge connecting the lid to the base, the hinge being provided at the joint surface and at one side of the container and extending along a straight hinge region spaced out from the intersection of one of the side walls of the recess and the joint surface;

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the said one side wall having:

- a portion angled at an acute angle with respect to the joint surface, the said wall portion being generally coplanar with the hinge region, whereby the container can be stood with the wall portion and the hinge on a support surface, with the intersection of the side wall of which it is a portion and joint surface set up from the support surface for collection of fluid from the contents of the container.

25 Whilst the base recess can be formed with three sides only intersecting the joint surface, it will normally have four such intersecting sides.

The container can be envisaged to be an injection moulding. However, it will normally be a thermoforming. The joint surface will normally be provided with

complementary formations. In the case of thermoforming, the complementary formations will normally be of top hat shape.

5 In the case of injection moulding the hinge can be a living hinge. In the preferred thermoforming, the hinge is provided by an E section double channel, which provides a determined hinge axis – or at least a straight hinge region.

10 The container is preferably shorter along the hinge region than in its dimension transverse to the hinge, whereby when stood on the angled portion of the base side wall, the container is generally stood on end, with the joint surface inclined backwards when the hinge is forwards.

15 Aside from the bottom function of the said angled portion, the container preferably has a conventional bottom to the base recess. This can be parallel to the joint surface or arranged to incline the joint surface oppositely to when it is stood on end. This inclined bottom in the preferred embodiment is substantially at right angles to the said angled portion.

20 The dome of the lid can be symmetrical in the lid. However, in the preferred embodiment, the doming is biased away from the hinge.

25 A particular feature of the preferred container is the provision of ears in both of the lid and base material webs, although one web only could be used, remote from the hinge. These ears are intended for lifting the container when the contents are hot. Preferably the ears having reinforcing formations.

Preferably the container is of transparent or at least translucent material.

30 To help understanding of the invention, a specific embodiment thereof will now be described by way of example and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a box of the invention stood up on end;  
Figure 2 is a side view of the box of Figure 1;  
Figure 3 is a front view of the box; and

Figure 4 is an end view of the box when laid half back.

Referring to the drawings, a thermoformed plastics material container 1 has a recessed base 2, with side walls 3,4,5,6 along four sides of the recess. Also the 5 container has a lid 7 with a dome 8. The base and the lid have rims 9,10, together providing a joint surface 11. Each rim is formed with a respective top hat formation 12,13 arranged to provide for openable closure of the container. A hinge 14 is along one edge of the container, in the form of an E cross-section channel 15 connecting the two rims 9,10.

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The hinge runs parallel to a "bottom" one 3 of the side walls of the base. This wall has a first portion 16 extending generally at right angles to the joint surface 11. Remote from the joint surface, it has an angled portion 17, which is coplanar with the hinge channel 15. The arrangement is such that the container can be stood on a 15 support surface S at the angled portion and the hinge. In this position, the edge of the wall portion 16 and the rim 9 is spaced above the surface S – despite the container being in effect stood on its end – whereby exudate E from a cooked chicken C in the container is retained within the container.

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The base 2 has a "bottom" 18, insofar as it is parallel to the joint surface, on which the container can be stood with the chick when juices E are the only weight in container. This is an unusual disposition. The side 5 opposite from the side 3 is shallowly angled with respect to the joint surface and is in fact at right angles to the angled portion of the side 3. The container can be stood on this surface for carving of 25 the chicken with the lid hinged open. The lid is domed opposite from the side 5 for accommodating the breast of the chicken.

Opposite from the hinge, the rims have a pair of opposed ears 21,22, with which the container can be picked up when stood on end.

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The material of the container is transparent for display of the chicken.